Halloween

'Are you going to Sue's Halloween party? It's fancy dress. I'm going as a ghost ---- in my mum's old white flannel sheet.' Helen asked.

I looked sideways at her. With her pale face and wispy grey hair, she'd make a fine ghost dressed in the white sheet.

'Nah,' I replied. 'Promised Anthea to help with the trick or treat for the kids. Going round the two streets near the church hall. Might pop in later though.'

'There'll be lots of food and drink. Always is. Do come.'

' I know,' I replied. 'I made the spider cake and the bat biscuits. See ya.' And off I quickly went.

I used to like the build up to Halloween, but now it's too commercial, comes too early in the shops and can be quite frightening with teenagers roaming the streets in cloaks and masks.

But…… my friends' children love it, the mock up graveyards in front gardens, the witch hanging from doorways, skeletons and that cobweb thing flung over hedges. I suppose I'll have to turn up at Sue's , later though, but what to wear as fancy dress?

As dusk fell I found myself at Anthea's, together with eight very excited young children, in cloaks, witches' hats and wands; a touch of Harry Potter perhaps? Anthea's friend was also there to help us, in an all in one skeleton outfit. I myself was carrying a broomstick plus a pumpkin lantern.

We started, looking for the sign that welcomes trick/ treaters … pumpkins with a light inside, plus fairy lights depicting ghosts, pumpkins etc all lit up outside the front door.

Every house we knocked on gave the children a warm welcome, very American I thought. After two hours of chatting, knocking on doors, eating the sweets or counting the money given, it was time to head home. Tired children settled down to watch the Disney channel whilst awaiting their parents. I went home to change.

I reckoned by now the party at Sue's would be in full swing; no one would notice me or my fancy dress , but I'd take the pumpkin lantern as well to spice up the outfit.

Light and laughter flooded the downstairs windows as I approached Sue's house. As the front door was open, I slid in quietly, hoping not to be noticed.

'You've come! That's great!' yelled Helen, appearing out of nowhere at my side.
'Er…… what have you come as?' she continued, staring at my bright, orange tunic reaching down to my knees; and glancing at the pumpkin lantern.

'A tin of tomato soup' I replied. 'You know I'm not fond of Halloween, so I thought of being part of the Autumn harvest, as soup.' With that, I went to get a drink (only bat's blood was available) and joined the party.

Liz